

HB 375 -- COUNTY CORONERS

SPONSOR: Cooper (120)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Local Government by a vote of 16 to 0.

This bill makes several changes to the laws regarding coroners. The bill:

- (1) Allows payment from the county or city to a pathologist, chemist, or other expert when employed by a coroner;
- (2) Clarifies that when a person dies while being transferred for medical treatment or is being treated in an emergency room of a receiving facility, the county or state from which the person is first removed is considered to be the place of death and makes that coroner responsible for the certificate of death. Notification of a county coroner is also necessary when certain institutionalized persons die after being transferred to an institution in another county. If the coroner in the county where the person died believes further investigation is warranted, the coroner may investigate with authorization from the transferring county coroner;
- (3) Requires emergency room staff or a county coroner to notify the transferring county coroner when a death occurs during transfer and to make information and records available for any investigation; and
- (4) Makes the county of origin of a deceased person responsible for any investigation in the case of homicide, suicide, child fatality, or any unusual or suspicious death.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill clarifies who is responsible for a death certificate and the cost of an autopsy if a person dies when being transferred. It will also speed up the process of issuing death certificates.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Cooper (120); and Missouri Coroners and Medical Examiners Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Steve Bauer, Legislative Analyst